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ABSTRACT

The manual is intended to recommend policy guidelines for special educators and transporters of handicapped students. Beginning with a review of the requirements of P.L. 94-142 (The Education for All Handicapped Children Act) and a discussion of transportation as a related service provided to handicapped students, the manual proceeds to considerations and recommendations regarding vehicle ownership, cost, length of ride, and location of pick-up and drop-off points. Implications of the individualized education program for transportation services and decisionmaking are analyzed, as are disciplinary and suspension procedures as they relate to transportation issues. Additional topics include transportation safety (assistive devices, emergencies, evacuation drills) and personnel training (handicapped student management, aides' roles, first aid). The manual concludes with a list of recommended guidelines for transporting handicapped students, which provides a summary of administrative procedures and related comments in chart form. (CL)

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TRANSPORTING HANDICAPPED STUDENTS:

A Resource Manual and Recommended Guidelines For School Transportation and Special Education Personnel

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PREFACE

The purposes of this manual are to familiarize the reader with Public Law 94-142 and transportation as a related service provided to handicapped students and to provide recommended policy guidelines for special educators and transporters of handicapped students.

Transportation of handicapped students is a key factor in access to special education. While many handicapped students use the same transportation services available for non-handicapped students, the fact remains that other handicapped students require specialized transportation services. Transportation personnel are instrumental in providing students who have special needs with assistance in order to receive special education. Drivers and aides are service providers to the same extent as psychologists, audiologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists and other professionals providing support services in addition to classroom instruction.

Because transportation of handicapped students is visible to the public and receives attention from school board members, community leaders, administrators, and parents each school system should have adequate written procedures pertaining to special federal and state requirements regarding handicapped students. Some of the major questions and topics each school system should focus on are:

(1) Do the school system's transportation procedures for handicapped students comply with state and federal requirements?

(2) Does the school system have written procedures which address :

(a) IEP development and management,
(b) Transportation cost to parents or guardians,
(c) Length of the ride,
(d) Pickup and drop-off procedures,
(e) Disciplinary action and suspension of handicapped students,
(f) Safety considerations
(g) Vehicle choice,
(h) Assistive devices,
(i) First aid training
(j) Emergency evacuation drills, and
(k) Personnel training?

Given the importance of special transportation of handicapped students, it is the responsibility of all persons involved in providing assistance to be capable and willing to fulfill their assigned role. The key to a successful program is in the cooperative implementation of procedures at each level of involvement.

This document is one effort to assist directors of transporation services and directors of special education to achieve that goal.

We appreciate the cooperation and assistance of the scores of persons involved in the various stages of development of this guide. We especially acknowledge the assistance of Glen Bowman, (Director, Louisiana Bureau of School Transportation), Dick Alexander, (Director, Maryland Pupil Transportation Section); Woody Fitzmaurice (Director, Missouri Pupil Transportation) and Paul Stewart (Director, West Virginia School Transportation); and David Stockford (State Director of Special Education, Maine).

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I

LEGAL CONTEXT OF TRANSPORTATION OF HANDICAPPED STUDENTS

The Constitution

The basic concepts pertaining to special education are derived from Section I of the XIV Amendment of the United States Constitution. The first paragraph states:

> All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

Section 504

Section 504 of P.L. 93-112, passed by Congress as part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, states that:

> No otherwise qualified handicapped individual in the United States...shall solely by reason of his handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

According to Section 504 regulations, "free" education means the provision of education and related services without cost to handicapped persons or guardians, except where such costs are imposed on all others.

Public Law 94-142

The Education for All Handicapped Children Act, signed into law in 1975, is unique in several of its provisions. It requires development of an individualized education program (IEP) for each handicapped student and requires that each person involved in any aspect of a handicapped child's special educational program be appropriately and adequately trained. Special education is defined in P.L. 94-142 as:

> "Specially designed instruction, at no cost to parents or guardians, to meet the unique needs of a handicapped child, including classroom instruction, instruction in physical education, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals and institutions.

P.L. 94-142 requires that transportation be provided as a related service if a child requires such service in order to benefit from special education. Transportation is defined as:

(i) "Travel to and from school and between schools,

(ii) Travel in and around school buildings, and

(iii) Specialized equipment (such as special or adapted busses, lifts, and ramps), if required to provide special transportation for a handicapped child (121a.13)"

Since the interpretation of when transportation is a related service varies, the following guidelines are recommended for decision making:

(1) If a child is not identified as needing special education there can be no related services, and special student transportation is not covered under P.L. 94-142.

(2) If a child is identified as needing special education and transportation as a related service, then the provision of this service must be without cost to the parents.

(3) The need for special education does not automatically authorize the need for transportation. This is an IEP committee's decision.

(4) Each transportation service situation should be examined independently by an IEP committee. School district procedures should be developed in line with Federal and State requirements.

(5) If a child is in residential placement, school district must provide transportation at the beginning and end of term and for scheduled holidays at a minimum, and more on a case by case basis.

(6) If an LEA provides physical or occupational therapy to a handicapped student after normal school hours it must provide transportation for such child.

(7) Where a child requires special transportation to a school within 2 miles of home, it must be included in IEP and provided even if state law generally limits transportation to children living more than two miles from school.

The following are typical situations requiring school district consideration:

(1) If a student resides within the prescribed walking distance to a school but, due to the nature of the handicapping condition the student cannot safely reach the school, then transportation service is an appropriate related service recommendation by an IEP committee.

(2) If an emotionally handicapped student has been suspended from a school to which the student previously walked and is being sent to a school which exceeds the prescribed walking distance, this student should now be provided transportation as a related service.

It is essential that the State Education Agency (SEA) and Local Education Agency (LEA) in each state provide written procedures for IEP committees to ensure consistent decision-making. However, individual case determination should always be permitted.

Both state and local education agencies must guarantee parent and student safeguards to protect due process rights in the decision-making process. Disputes which cannot be resolved through mediation may have to be resolved through due process.

II

TRANSPORTATION CONSIDERATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Vehicle Ownership

P.L. 94-142 does not specify ownership requirements. A variety of options are available to provide transportation. A local education agency can accommodate handicapped students' transportation needs by: (1) owning the transportation vehicles; (2) contracting for transportation services (public and private); (3) renting transportation vehicles; (4) sharing of ownership of vehicles; or (5) reimbursement of a private carrier. Transportation ownership varies from state to state and throughout the various local education agencies.

Cost

Transportation must be provided at no charge to a handicapped student if this service is required for the student to be provided special education. Insufficient transportation funds is never a valid reason to deny this related service to a handicapped student.

- When a local school system approves the placement of a handicapped child in a program it does not operate, it must ensure that transportation is provided at no cost to the parents. If the school system and parent agree that the parent will transport the child to a public or non-public school, this agreement should be in writing. If the Agreement provides for reimbursement to the parent, the school system should check to make certain that parents providing transportation have a valid license, meet individual state insurance provisions and vehicle inspection provisions.

P.L. 94-142 and Section 504 do not set a reimbursement schedule. Most state and local education agencies use typical employee travel reimbursement tables to determine the amount of the payment. General cost issues should be worked out prior to service delivery. If the parent and the school system do not agree on the adequacy of the reimbursement allowance, this dispute could be resolved by a due process hearing.

Parents or guardians are not required to provide transportation for their children. It is the obligatory responsibility of an educational agency to provide transportation for a handicapped student regardless of either inability or unwillingness on the part of the parent or guardian to furnish transportation.

When a handicapped student is placed in a (distant) residential facility for educational purpose, P.L. 94-142 does not set a standard for the number of allowed trips home. At minimum, most school systems provide transportation at the beginning and end of the school term and for scheduled school holidays and/or recesses. It is the responsibility of individual state and/or local education agencies to have written procedures defining this area. The number of trips home should be stated on the student's IEP.

Length of the Ride

Neither P.L. 94-142 nor Section 504 provide regulations on the length of the school bus ride to receive special education services. This matter needs to be addressed by state education agencies and local education agencies. The maximum length of the ride should be determined on an individual basis and reviewed periodically by the IEP committee.

In most cases transportation for a student should not exceed one hour each way. However, with IEP committee approval, transportation travel may exceed this recommended time period based on the following factors: (1) location of the home to assigned school, (2) nature of the handicap (possibly necessitating a distant school placement), (3) rush hour traffic in urban areas, and (4) other unique situations requiring special arrangements.

Location of Pickup and Drop-Off Points

P.L. 94-142 and Section 504 do not establish requirements regarding pick-up and drop-off locations. Each school district should have a written procedure regarding pick-up and drop-off practices. When special transportation services are required, Local education agencies should be responsible for picking up handicapped students at the residence of their parents or guardian unless prior alternate arrangements are mutually agreed upon. In addition, parents or guardians should be responsible for getting the handicapped child to the drive or curbside and for meeting the vehicle at the end of the school day at the drop-off point. Deviations because of individual circumstances should be agreed upon on an individual basis as noted on the IEP.

Location of loading and unloading sites for students with handicapping conditions may require alterations from standard operating procedures. These alterations should be noted on the IEP. For example, the parent of a student using Mass Transit services should approve the pick-up and drop-off site. In addition, there should be a written procedure on how to handle the situation when no authorized person is available to receive the student.

Disputes regarding transportation cost, length of the ride and location of pick-up and drop-off points could be the subject of due process hearings.

III

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP): IMPLICATIONS FOR TRANSPORTATION SERVICES AND DECISIONS

The Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is the instrument for recording the student's special education goals and specifications for related services. It is a written commitment of all services to be furnished. The law sets detailed procedures and requirements for (1) the actual meeting at which parents and school personnel jointly make decisions, and (2) the development and approval of the document itself.

Recommendations

° All students who receive transportation as a related service should have this service recorded in the IEP. The type of vehicle used, the frequency of the service and any special or unique modifications should be specified. Transportation should always be defined on the IEP to the extent that this service is provided in a manner which is unique and exceeds transportation for non-handicapped students. All specific information about given student should be reflected on the IEP prior to actual implementation. Written procedures from the transporation department should be available to facilitate decision-making for the IEP committee.

° The IEP committee should always recommend transportation services in the least restrictive, most appropriate mode available. Transportation should be recommended and provided in a manner consistent with the student's individual needs. When transportation as a related service is recommended and approved by the IEP committee, it must be provided at no cost to the parent or guardian. If the IEP committee recommends and approves an extended school year program for the student, such approval is a condition of the IEP, and transportation must be free and in accordance with regular school year practices. This should be recorded on the IEP.

° If transportation service is discontinued, an IEP meeting should be convened to discuss this related service.

° Each school system should determine at what age it is safe to initiate transportation of handicapped students to receive special education services. An important consideration for serving children from birth on is vehicle selection; another is supervision of students. Transportation planning and services should be the joint responsibility of special education and transportation departments. Each of these departments should clearly define its responsibility.

° If a parent is dissatisfied with the determination of the type of transportation recommended by the IEP committee, the parent has the right to request an impartial due process hearing in accordance with federal and State provisions.

IV

TRANSPORTATION DISCIPLINARY AND SUSPENSION PROCEDURES FOR HANDICAPPED STUDENTS

Handicapped students, like all other students, are subject to disciplinary action(s) pursuant to the written rules of state and local education agencies. However, school bus disciplinary or suspension action should require an IEP committee review, when this service is being provided as a related service. Since a handicapped student may not be subjected to punitive action solely on the basis of being handicapped, the problem that arises is determining the relationship between the proposed disciplinary action and the handicapping condition. When the behavior for which the student is to be removed from transportation service is the result of the student's handicapping condition, the student cannot also be deprived of access to special education. This is not to say that, if the behavior is of danger to the driver and/or other students, transportation may not be interrupted. However, it is recommended that an interruption in this service should necessitate an "emergency" IEP meeting to determine the relationship of the behavior causing disciplinary action to the child's handicapping condition, and to determine alternative transportation services or methods.

It is recommended that any suspension of transportation services not exceed five school days in a given school year. Should a suspension of transportation services exceed five school days, the child and parents must be provided with procedural safeguards; and an IEP meeting should be called to determine if the student's handicap was a signficant cause of the behavior that prompted the disciplinary action. If the determination is "yes", then the suspension should be rescinded.

In some cases a change in educational placement to a more restrictive environment might be required because of the severity of transportation problems. However, in most instances, other determinative intervention, such as additional supervisory staff or management strategies, should be successful in modifying the situation. In order to deal equitably with suspension issues, written procedures are essential. Matters regarding suspensions of transportation services are subject to due process review under P.L. 94-142.

V

TRANSPORTATION SAFETY

P.L. 94-142 and Section 504 do not specify the type of vehicle or which special education students should be transported. P.L. 94-142 does state:

> "Specialized equipment (such as special or adapted busses lift, and ramps), if required to provide special transportation for a handicapped child" should be provided to assure appropriate transportation.

Handicapped students may be transported on a variety of vehicles. these include:

(a) Standard School Bus

(b) Mass Transit System (Bus or subway)

(c) Minibus

(d) Van Unit

(e) Taxi Cab

(f) Private Vehicle

(g) School Bus with adapted equipment

The vehicle choice should be recommended by the IEP committee, including parents and transportation personnel. Parents should be informed and in agreement with the type of vehicle on which their child is being transported. This should be noted directly on the IEP. Any changes in vehicle type should be reviewed by the IEP committee. For example, if a student is being transported on a yellow bus and at a later date mass transit is recommended, then an IEP meeting must be conducted to approve this change.

Assistive Devices

Assistive devices include, crutches, canes, walkers, braces, and wheelchairs. Handicapped students who use assistive devices require careful individual consideration. A qualified member of the IEP committee should address the use of an assistive device as it pertains to the transportation vehicle when procedures (adaptions) beyond standard measures are recommended. Adaptive procedures should be explicitly defined on the IEP. An example of this would be the use of a safety belt or vest to hold a child securely in a position to conform with a physician's prescription.

Handicapped students who use assistive devices may require adaptive boarding equipment. Appropriate use of lift equipment is necessary to provide for safe boarding. Provisionsmust be made to fit each individual student's situation. For example, wheelchairs vary and require different methods of locking. Special considerations should be noted on the IEP. In addition, it is essential that crutches, canes, and walkers be secured safely during the ride.

School systems should carefully choose and assign students with assistive devices to school busses that can meet individual student safety requirements to assure a safe ride. Specific requirements must be met by all types of adaptive equipment used to transport handicapped students.

Emergencies

School bus drivers and aides should be familiar with the students they transport and the characteristics of the handicapping conditions associated with these individuals. Knowledge about individual handicapped students facilitates proper identificaiton of what is or is not an emergency situation. It is important that drivers and aides be instructed to respond appropriately to each situation. Adequate training could eliminate potential dangers. Student emergency cards should be carried on the school bus.

Parents should complete an emergency card annually, and approve of the use of this information. Information should be handled as confidential data under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. The Act covers records, files, documents and other materials which contain information directly relating to a student. Both the maintenance and use of emergency files should be in accord with federal, state, and local policies. A first aid kit should be located on each vehicle transporting handicapped students.

Evacuation Drills

It is essential to have a written plan for emergency evacuations, and for those students who use assistive devices and/or wheelchairs. Evacuation procedures should be well known and rehearsed by drivers and aides to assure competent handling of both ambulatory and non-ambulatory students if an emergency situation should arise. Drivers and aides should be able to evacuate all passengers by all available exits with or without the use of a hydraulic lift. Written directions should be posted near all mechanical apparatus requiring special operating skills and knowledge.

Handicapped students with physical, emotional, and mental limitations should be familiarized with safe and organized evacuation procedures. Whether handicapped students ride regular busses or specially adapted busses, they should be instructed to function within their individual capabilities. These procedures should be written and practiced with periodic drills. A written plan should include: (1) emergency stop locations, (2) phone locations if there is no two way radio system, and (3) charted (shortest) routes to hospitals.

A seating chart with student photographs should be available for non-verbal students. Photographs should also be attached to emergency cards. This is a necessary precaution for situations in which a driver could be incapacitated or unable to identify students.

VI

PERSONNEL TRAINING

In addition to a given school system's transportation manual, specific written procedures should be provided to transportation personnel to facilitate the understanding of the special needs of handicapped students.

School district liability for tranporting students with special needs increases if adequate training to transportation personnel is not provided. Training should be conducted by transportation and special education departments on a regular schedule. Adequate skill development should be measured by a competency based instrument as well as by observation of day to day management. Periodic inservice training should include updated insruction:

(1) Characteristics of handicapping conditions
(2) IEP development, implementation and approval procedures
(3) Due process procedures
(4) Behavior management techniques
(5) Seating selection/assignment methods
(6) Schedule management
(7) Care and management of Assistive devices
(8) Communication with parents and students
(9) Emergency management procedures
(10) Special evacuation procedures
(11) First aid training
(12) Loading and unloading procedures
(13) Disciplinary procedures

Handicapped Student Management

Behavior management is the shared responsibility of both driver and aide. The driver or aide serving handicapped students require knowledge and skills in managing special situations.

Appropriate behavior management is necessary to assure safe transit. An effective driver and aide team is one that provides for a systematic arrangement of the vehicle environment allowing maximum opportunity for exhibiting appropriate student behaviors. This can only be done after there is a clear understanding about each of the eleven handicapping conditions and how each condition may or may not be directly related to the need for specific behavior management intervention. Handicapped children who are being transported should have their special needs recorded on the IEP, and each driver and aide should know about these needs.

Deaf students may or may not require special transportation services. The transporters of deaf students should be familiar with total communication if this is the student's primary method of communication. This is one appropriate way to facilitate both rapport and safety. Paper and pencil allow for communication with older deaf students.

Hard of hearing students can be transported on regular vehicles; however, the transporter of this population should receive special training in effective communication. Deaf and hard of hearing students must understand expected bus behavior prior to its being required.

Mentally retarded students range from mildly to profoundly intellectually limited. Transportation service needs are dependent on the student's independent level of functioning as well as the location of the school placement. Simple and clear instructions are a necessity. Realistic expectations should be set up to avoid frustration for the transporter, student and parent(s).

Multi-handicapped students may or may not be ambulatory. These students require careful transportation because of their limited independence and/or severe mobility limitations. This population often requires close supervision and special consideration to ensure maximum school bus safety.

Orthopedically impaired students require special transportation services to meet individual mobility and safety needs. A carefully designed program that outlines such transportation and appropriate use of adapted equipment is essential.

Other health impaired students include students with asthma, heart conditions, etc., who require individual consideration. Most often these conditions are not obvious to the driver. These students may utilize the regular school bus or may need specifically prescribed adaptations.

Seriously emotionally disturbed children may require special transportation. In some instances an aide is needed to manage inappropriate student behavior. Transporters of these students should receive extensive behavior management training.

Specific learning disability students rarely require special school bus transportation unless they are attending a special school, but many require patience and understanding because of language and information processing problems.

Speech impaired students do not require special school transportation because of their handicap, though transportation may be required because of the school placement site.

Visually impaired students may or may not require special transportation; however, some students may need assistance when moving about on the school bus to maximize safety.

Deaf-blind students require special consideration to maximize mobility, safety, and communication. Transporters should receive very specific training in mobility orientation and in total communication.

While some students may require special transportation services, many handicapped students require transporatation as a related service only because of the location of their educational placement. It is important that drivers and aides know what to expect from each student. They also need to understand that every student must be treated with respect regardless of the handicapping condition or functioning level.

Some recommendations to facilitate appropriate student behavior are:

(1) Establish a daily routine

(2) Driver and aide should function as a cooperative team

(3) Minimize the number of bus rules as much as safety permits

(4) Make sure individuals have the capacity to understand the rules

(5) Communicate at the functioning level of the student

(6) Reward appropriate behavior with attention and praise

(7) Handle problems consistent with the school behavior management program

In extreme instances where problems persist, the transportation director may request that the IEP committee meet to review the problem. Some special considerations may include, (1) late pick-up and early drop-off on the route, (2) special seating arrangements, (3) special aide arrangements, and (4) individual student contact. Modifications mentioned above should be a part of the IEP document.

Special Tasks of Aides

Aides should be placed on vehicles that transport students who demonstrate behavior(s) which could disrupt the driver. The aide should be able to perform the following tasks:

(1) Manage behavior

(2) Manage seating

(3) Operate the lift system

(4) Supervise assistive device usage

(5) Load and unload students

(6) Assist with emergency management

(7) Assist with evacuation procedures

(8) Implement special IEP services

(9) Communicate effectively with students

(10) Communicate and establish positive relationships with parents

The job descriptions for driver and aide positions should clearly define their respective roles. It is essential that transportation personnel who are required to serve handicapped students be proficient in both vehicle safety and student management procedures.

First Aid Training

First aid training for transportation personnel is an individual state and/or local education agency decision. Proper first aid training is recommended for all driver and aide personnel transporting handicapped students with physical and/or seizure problems.

RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES FOR TRANSPORTING HANDICAPPED STUDENTS

A. P.L. 94-142	Administrative Procedures	Comments
1. Related Services	Each local education agency (LEA) shall provide transportation as a related service if a student requires this service in order to receive special education. If transportation is provided as a related service, it will be furnished at no cost to parents or guardians.	Transportation is defined in P.L. 94-142 and includes: (1) Travel to and from school and between schools, (2) Travel in and around school buildings, and (3) Specialized equipment (such as special or adapted buses, lifts, and ramps) if required to provide special transportation for a handicapped child (300.13)
2. Individualized Education Program (IEP)	Transportation as a related service must be recorded on the IEP then approved and signed by the parent or guardian prior to initiating transportation services.	Approval of the type of transportation services on the IEP should be the responsibility of both the Departments of Special Education & Transportation. Transportation recommendations should be agreed upon prior to offering a special service to a parent or guardian.
3. Length of Ride	The length of the vehicle ride is an LEA decision unless state regulations specify travel time restraints. The length of the ride should be addressed by an IEP committee on an individual basis if it is a concern.	P.L. 94-142 does not address length of vehicle ride. Each LEA should have written procedures regarding length of ride. It is recommended that transport time be limited to no more than one hour each way.

A. P.L. 94-142	Administrative Procedures	Comments
4. Pickup and Drop-Off Location	The LEA should designate pickup and drop-off locations; special circumstances should be addressed on an individual basis at an IEP meeting and recorded on the IEP.	P.L. 94-142 does not address pickup and drop-off locations. Each LEA should have written procedures. Non-ambulatory children should be picked up at the residence of their parent or legal guardian unless alternate arrangements can be mutually agreed upon by all parties.
5. Parent or Guardian Provided Transportation	If the LEA requests that the parent or guardian transport the child, the LEA shall reimburse the parent or guardian at the same rate per mile paid LEA agency employees. Parents or guardians are not required to provide IEP approved transportation as a related service to ensure the child receives special education services.	P.L. 94-142 does not require a parent or guardian to provide the related service transportation. In instances where parents or guardians provide transportation, each LEA should assure that licensing, insurance and vehicle inspection matters are in accordance with all required state and/or local school system policies.
6. Due Process	The LEA will guarantee parents and guardians procedural safeguards to protect their due process rights if disputes regarding transportation cannot be resolved. Consultation with supervisors of	Under P.L. 94-142 provisions, parents and guardians are assured procedural safeguards regarding special education and related services.

A. P.L. 94-142		
6. Due Process (cont'd)	special education and transportation is appropriate for conflict resolution. Efforts to resolve conflicts should be attempted during the IEP process.	

RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES FOR TRANSPORTING HANDICAPPED STUDENTS

B. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES	Administrative Procedures	Comments
1. Disciplinary Removal from Transportation Services	Handicapped students, like all other students, are subject to disciplinary action(s). Disciplinary actions relating to transportation require an IEP committee review if transportation is provided as a related service and it is recommended that this service be interrupted for more than 5 days. If a disciplinary action is recommended because a student's behavior is of danger to the driver and/or other students, any interruption in service necessitates that an IEP committee meeting be conducted within 5 school days	Disciplinary actions should be written and approved by the IEP committee. Section 504 states that no handicapped student may be punished solely because of being handicapped; the question that arises is the relationship between the proposed disciplinary action and the handicapping condition.

RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES FOR TRANSPORTING HANDICAPPED STUDENTS

	Administrative Procedures	Comments
2. Suspension from Transportation Services	If it is recommended that a student be permanently suspended from transportation services for behaviors that are of danger to the driver and/or other students, an IEP committee review is required.	(1) P.L. 94-142 and Section 504 do not directly address the question of suspension. Each school system should develop written procedures. Discontinuation of the related service transportation is subject to due process review. (2) A student cannot be suspended permanently from transportation services if the suspension prevents the student from access to special education services. This action is considered discriminatory and would violate Section 504. (3) In extreme situations, a change in educational placement to a more restrictive one may be required because of inability to provide safe transportation

RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES FOR TRANSPORTING HANDICAPPED STUDENTS

C. TRANSPORTATION OWNERSHIP	Administrative Procedures	Comments
1. Transportation Accommodation	The LEA may choose the method of accommodating the handicapped students' transportation needs by: (1) Owning the transportation vehicles (2) Contracting transportation services (public or private) (3) Renting transportation vehicles (4) Sharing ownership of vehicles or (5) Reimbursement of private or carrier.	P.L. 94-142 and Section 504 do not specify transportation ownership should be in accordance with individual state and local education agency policies and procedures.

D. VEHICLE CHOICE	Administrative Procedures	Comments
1. Transportation Vehicle Selection	A variety of vehicles may be used to meet the individual transportation needs of handicapped students. These include: - Standard School Bus - School Bus with Adapted Equipment - Mass Transit - Mini Bus - Van Unit - Taxi - Private Vehicle The vehicle options selected shall be noted directly on the IEP. Vehicle selection should be in line with the individual SEA and LEA written guidelines.	(1) P.L. 94-142 and Section 504 do not prescribe the type of vehicle on which hardicapped students should be transported. (2) P.L. 94-142 does state: Specialized equipment (such as special or adapted buses, lifts, and ramps), if required to provide special transportation for a handicapped child (300.13), shall be provided to access appropriate transportation.

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E. SPECIAL SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS	Administrative Procedures	Comments
1. Assistive Devices	A qualified member of the IEP committee shall address the use of assistive devices on transportation vehicles if procedures beyond standard operations are recommended.	Assistive device provisions should be on an individual student basis. Special considerations should be noted on the IEP and approved by the committee prior to implementation
2. First Aid Training	First Aid training is recommended for all persons who transport handicapped students with physical and/or seizure disorders.	First Aid training should be considered in accordance with state and local policy.
3. Emergencies	Transporters of handicapped students should have an indivdual emergency card for each student that is carried on the vehicle at all times. Information shall be handled as confidential data under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974.	Transporters of handicapped students should be knowledgeable about specific conditions in order to prevent the over identification of what is an emergency situation.
4. Evacuation Drills	Evacuation procedures for handicapped students should be well known and rehearsed. Handicapped students with physical, emotional, and mental limitations should practice evacuation procedures to their maximum capacity.	A written evacuation plan should be printed and available on each transportation vehicle.

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F. TRANSPORTATION PERSONNEL	Administrative Procedures	Comments
1. Written Procedures	Each LEA shall provide all transportation personnel with written procedures and policies regarding transportation of handicapped students.	
2. Drivers	Drivers of vehicles transporting handicapped students shall receive training regarding handicapping conditions. Drivers of handicapped students shall receive training regarding disciplinary and suspension measures. Drivers of handicapped students shall be provided written guidelines about a student's procedural safeguards. Drivers shall receive supervisory assistance upon request.	
3. Aides	Transportation aides shall be employed by the local education agency and not work on a voluntary basis. Transportation aides shall receive training regarding handicapping conditions. Transportation aides shall receive behavior management training. Transportation aides shall receive written guidelines about student's procedural safeguards.	

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	Administrative Procedures	Comments
4. In-Service Training	Each LEA shall provide in-service training for vehicle operators and aides transporting handicapped students. In-service training shall include, in addition to regular training program, instruction regarding: - P.L. 94-142 and Section 504 Requirements - Information about Handicapping Conditions - Disciplinary and Suspension Procedures - Knowledge of Assistive Device Management - Emergency - Evacuation - Behavior Management Techniques - First aid training	Vehicle operators and aides shall complete a program of training within the first six months of employment.